

**“They really got to listen to the people's concerns...quit talking, just action.”**

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Kennedy King Community College

*Perspectives on Chicago Gun Violence*  
Interview No. 6  
April 6, 2018



### **Chicago Gun Violence Research Collaborative**

The Chicago Gun Violence Research Collaborative (CGVRC) Graduate Student Fellowship brings together student fellows (graduate students from Chicago-based universities) and faculty fellows (professors and public health professionals) to address gun violence by conducting change-oriented research in partnership with Chicago communities.

To learn more about the CGVRC, please visit us at: <https://www.cgvrc.org>

### **Perspectives on Chicago Gun Violence**

Our *Perspectives on Chicago Gun Violence* project allowed CGVRC Graduate Student Fellows and CGVRC Faculty to conduct stakeholder interviews, gaining a diverse perspective on local gun violence and organizational efforts to prevent it. The CGVRC was funded through support from Sinai Urban Health Institute, the Shure Charitable Trust, the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago, and United Way of Metropolitan Chicago.

**Biography:** This interview is with Dwayne Daniel; he is a Chicago native and works as the Program Manager at Kennedy King Community College. This interview was done as part of the Chicago Gun Violence Research Collaborative Graduate Student Fellowship series, *Perspectives on Chicago Gun Violence*. **This interview contains graphic language.** It has been edited for length and clarity.

**CGVRC Faculty:** So, our first question is, could you just tell us a little bit about who you are?

**Dwayne Daniel:** I'm Dwayne Daniel. I guess the basics would be: a father of two young sons, young adults, I should have said. One's 19 and one's 26. I've been married for now 24 years, born and raised in Chicago, South Side of Chicago. Mostly in what's now known as Bronzeville. When I was coming up it was Douglas, named after the cemetery, that the general Civil War General's Cemetery down there on off of 35th and Cottage Grove. Again, living in Chicago all my life, currently stay in the Washington Park neighborhood, just East of the Dan Ryan Expressway. Family's been in either Bronzeville, or the Washington Park community for all of my life. So I'm 53 years old, we again, came from the Bronzeville area, 37th and Ellis, and we moved to the Washington Park neighborhood. Me and my family moved to the Auburn Gresham neighborhood for about 17 years. I lived out there on a few properties and things like that. You know, chasing the American dream aspect, trying, as most folks, trying to find a safe environment for your kids to grow up in.

I'm a city kid...didn't want to abandon the community and moved to the suburbs. Considering that I've invested so much here and I'm determined to see my tax dollars work. So, with that said, the amount of taxes that you pay, you know, sure there's better school districts around Chicago, but at some point if all of us leave, then of course those that are much more marginalized than I am, don't have the opportunities for any type of success. Background as far as educational: went to a public grammar school, you may be familiar, Edward Beasley, which is down on 53rd and State Street left to go to a public high school, which was done by vocational, attended DePaul for about a semester many years ago, really wanted to be an architect. That was my dream job, an architect, or an Air Force fighter pilot.

**CGVRC Faculty:** Two very different jobs.

**Dwayne Daniel:** Yeah, you know, boys will be boys. I think at that time, the way our society, American society, kind of pushed boys in a certain direction and since we're supposed to be so good at science and math, right? Which is just not true, for each individual. So, I have an Associate's Degree in Architectural Engineering.

**CGVRC Faculty:** So, that part of the dream came true.

**Dwayne Daniel:** Yeah, I couldn't find a job, so I had to come back to school. Just the nature of, what it is in Chicago, particularly at that time in the eighties and early nineties, it wasn't likely that a young African American from the South Side, could get a junior apprenticeship job in an architectural firm here in Chicago. And it just

wasn't happening. So, you get frustrated but you move forward. Went back to school for finance, a Business Finance graduate from Roosevelt University. Started working, don't ask me how, really I guess I got laid off at a Sears Roebuck and I used to work in the Sears Tower, got laid off. Six months being laid off when you're young with no responsibilities is not such a bad thing, but you know, my oldest son was born, so I had to get back to work. Anyway, started working with a non for profit organization that works with offenders and ex-offenders returning back, at that time it was called work release centers. As we move forward, a couple of Governors have described it as community corrections and now the word is transitional facilities. They're the lowest level of community corrections in the state, outside of being at home, on home monitoring because you're still in a facility that's state sanctioned. Started teaching adult basic education. Been doing it now, good for twenty six years. And again, it kinda happened because I needed employment, but at the same time it was a good fit for me because I understood the plight of a lot of the individuals that I came across. I had some empathy and some passion for the job because of where I grew up at, at that time in the sixties, seventies, and even eighties, State Street was the housing corridor from Garfield to as far as to 22nd Street, being that I was one block removed, whether I lived with them or not, that was my neighborhood. So, you understand that people are people no matter where they're from, who their parents are, their socioeconomic backgrounds. And you also learned that we all need help. No one does any of this alone. I was young so I guess I could relate because I started working with the youth. At that time, they used to call – the word was “adolescents.” Youth came along about 98, 99, 2000. It was implemented and then that was the language that the federal government used, hence, we all started using. So long story short, that's kind of like my journey as far as through the corrections side, growing up in what's described as an impoverished, violent, high crime neighborhood. When you're in it, you see people differently, it always seemed different when you're a part of some, but when, even when you come out, you still see it different.

You see in a way that people who haven't experienced this will probably never see it, you know, so you're just made aware of things in a lot of family structure. Unfortunately, when it's dissolved in these communities, for various reasons, you know, we don't need to go into why I think or it's not why I think what was a truly institutional process that was put in place, hence why we have gun violence. I think that it's more institutional and economic than it is about particularly race, even though race plays a role, it's more about the income.

**CGVRC Faculty:** That's a great segue into the rest of our interview here. Before we jump into the gun violence part, I was wondering, could you say your organization's name and then describe your role here at the organization.

**Dwayne Daniel:** Well, I came to the City Colleges of Chicago four years ago. I started originally up at Truman working part time as a Coordinator over testing. Tremendous – one of the largest community colleges in the state.

I've traveled 40 miles every day and never left the city because I was still working at the Adult Transition Center on the West Side full time, that was part time.

**CGVRC Faculty:** Okay, night classes?

**Dwayne Daniel:** Night over at Truman. Yeah. Afternoon and evenings at Truman. So anyway, I ran the adult ed program at the community corrections at the Transition Center on the west side.

So, I mean doing coordinators work, it was great. The testing, I have a big background, experience with testing, whether it's the standardized test, the GED, the HiSET, ACT, the constitution, they have what they call the tape test. It is the test of adult basic education, unfortunately with a lot of these standardized tests, they're dated, and you know, any educator will tell about the frustrations with the tape test, for that matter, with any standardized test.

**CGVRC Faculty:** What's your role here at Kennedy King?

**Dwayne Daniel:** My role here at Kennedy King is a manager, so like that of what I had at the work release center, Community Corrections Center. I am involved with evaluating and supporting the adult educators, the coordinators, the clerical staff, also supervising them, providing coaching, training. I'm also supporting the Dean's efforts, college efforts, and that passes it all to the District's effort to provide good quality educational opportunity for the students in this community. And I've been here now 22 months.

**CGVRC Faculty:** So, clearly it's an educational institution, that's one way that Kennedy King helps Englewood, but is there ways that Kennedy King helps Englewood that's kind of outside of what people think of when they think of education?

**Dwayne Daniel:** Yeah. I think when you think of any institution in the community shouldn't be there if it doesn't help the community, whether it's financial, whether it's educational, whether it's law enforcement. It doesn't matter who resides within a community. I think Kennedy King's role that you don't see besides the educational opportunities that are allowed here is that beacon of light. That one, institutional, particularly of an educational higher learning, usually provide some form of safety and security to people. They feel people should want to feel safe or feel safe when going to school even in the roughest neighborhoods, right? When some make it in the doors they have this anxiety releases. Right? Also, that we provide a customer service that should be expected each and every time we encounter folks from any, again, any institution, whether it's educational or financial or etcetera. That's one thing that we as a department are trying to really implement. The negative side too, when you work, live in neighborhoods that have been marginalized for so long is that we tend to think, you know, C service is A and it is only C but yet we get used to C so we think that C, we accept C, because again, conditional over time and I think Kennedy King is

on the right track and trying to reach that A service level. In a lot of capacities it's there. But again, we have work to do. Anyone that thinks they're at A level of service probably will be out of business quickly. I'm sure you can ask any CEO of any major company that very question and it's always about customers, customers, customers, customers, when it's not, again, you're in the wrong business.

**CGVRC Faculty:** An interesting way to frame beacon of lights, serving as a beacon of light for the community. How else do you think Kennedy King does it? You mentioned that when people walk in, they kind of can relax, they're at a good educational institution, but are there other ways that you've, that you've seen Kennedy King as a beacon of light?

**Dwayne Daniel:** Again, a lot of the programs, the classes that are offered here, are in proximity to a lot of people. Chicago is the city of neighborhoods, right? But it's also so easy to travel to us, right? But when you tend to get caught in the, as I call it, the four block radius for whatever reason, not too many people from Lincoln Park travel here for parties to get more than four blocks. But you get what I'm saying. So if that's the case, then you have to have, you'd have to have programming classes available that people can come to that say, "Hey, Kennedy King is offering heating and air condition program, right? Hey! That's two blocks from me, I could walk there." So the programming, the classes, some of the classes that are all, particularly like I say, the heating and air condition auto body, auto mechanics, graphic arts and one of the best culinary programs in the state of Illinois at a price that no one else can beat, those are great things to offer people.

Again, there's more community collaboration, which again, as I stated earlier, you must have community collaboration for these institutions to stay open and be available for people. And I like a lot of the community collaboration that I'm seeing. Kennedy King, This is Englewood, I'm sure you guys noticed the "I am Englewood" signs that are up and that's a good thing. I guess one could look at it negative because I always have been here, but I guess trying to shake some of the negative publicity that its received over time.

So those are just some of the ways, and they're bringing young adults like you guys into the community, with housing opportunities, being able to buy property, being able to grow, open up businesses. Those are all great ideas and Kennedy King is that beacon, you want your higher learning institutions to be that place that everything branches off of, University of Chicago, right? Everything branches off of the University of Chicago. Even where I live.

**CGVRC Faculty:** Very true.

**Dwayne Daniel:** I'm on the West side of Washington Park, but Washington Park now is University of Chicago.

**CGVRC Faculty:** This is all really helpful. I want to talk a little bit now specifically about gun violence. Can you describe your personal perception of gun violence in Englewood?

**Dwayne Daniel:** Devastating, overtime. A lack of services and resources that community has endured for 40 plus years, maybe even 50 is just unacceptable, demoralizing, totally inhumane. And it's also a great opportunity for change, because all of those 40 years we've tried various tactics to rid the community of that, supposedly. But the gun violence here, has also been exacerbated as well. Because, you know, we have a way of controlling the narrative in this country through media, through publications. Fortunately, through home loans, lack of home loans...the whole gambit, right? And with that said, the availability of guns in this community is just unheard of, right? At one point it was just totally right, in, in most low income communities of black and brown, just totally unheard of.

And when you look at the fact that one can obtain a gun, a bottle of liquor, a drug, that is just going to devastate entire family, quicker than they can let's say, I don't know, just to say a job, it's mind boggling and how people can imagine anything different than what exists. Being that we're all educated, and we imagine something different. So, it's created generations of people who've suffered trauma, like they've been at war, I mean, major war. You're talking World War II, World War I level of stuff that's been through this community. And all you get is conversation from folks, you know, it's disheartening, it's totally again, totally inhuman. And it bothers me that we know it's an easy fix. It's really an easy fix. I mean, come on, if they can listen to our conversation now, this country, us, you know, with the technology you can do all these things have just been published through-what's going on with Facebook and the company. You can police and you can secure these communities better.

Yeah, I mean, It's not an accident that it doesn't happen in Rogers Park, doesn't happen in Lincoln Park. It's not an accident. If people really believe that people in Englewood, in North Lawndale want to hear shootings all day, they really have a lot to learn about situations. And their blinders are just so on and their ears are so shut. It's, they really need some help. But I get it, the narrative is controlled differently throughout parts of the city, economic backgrounds.

**CGVRC Faculty:** You gave a lot of really important, big factors. If you were to boil it down, somebody asked you, "What do you think generates gun violence in one word?" What would you say?

**Dwayne Daniel:** Hmm, it's not one thing. There are multiple factors, you know, indirectly it's of course the lack of opportunities, job opportunities, housing opportunities, education it's just wow- mind boggling in America who I don't know where we're going to, you know, thank god I'm hopeful with you guys. This generation coming up, you know, how you seem to approach all of this, which is great, which is very encouraging. But also there's some things, the total breakdown of families that have been institutionalized in America over the last 70 plus years has had a devastating effect on communities, because a lot of behaviors start at

home. Behaviors start at home, there's just no excuse beyond that, but you have to provide opportunities for folks, and you know, you cannot, again, make it that easy for me to obtain a weapon that's designed to take a life. If a 12 year old, can have a gun, but yet cannot get a meal prior to school, we're missing so much. We're just missing a lot. And those are a lot of the things that this community, again, Lawndale, the Pullman area. You know, even Pilsen, Little Village and the rest of them, right? What is it Belmont Cragin? Are neighborhoods that have been transformed, gentrified now, so it's great that these neighborhoods arising like Englewood, but will they rise only again to displace the very people that they should have been serving in the first place?

But, I think the gun violence has always been about economics and also it's been a design to put stuff in certain neighborhoods and not in the others. Now of course the community has to fight back in every way, shape and form to kind of try to reverse some of this stuff. But, you have to make accessible or available other opportunities. You can't keep it as, we'll give you one good school in the community, so every kid from the Dan Ryan back to Western will have to attend. Well, no one takes into thought the boundaries that these young men and women – children of loving and caring parents – will have to travel to because us adults can't provide them safety. In reality, I think it's adults. We failed a lot of generations terribly, that's why a lot of the violence is here.

**CGVRC Faculty:** When you think about the adults, some of the failures, what would you say is being done in Englewood to address gun violence?

**Dwayne Daniel:** I think some of the enforcement of some of the laws, just talking about it sometimes. Not just in a negative way, in you know, "A 16 year old black male shot on 58th and St. Lawrence" like the human being doesn't exist. It's more about the, the accident versus the person who is affected, which is again about messaging, you know? So, some of that is changing. People are demanding change, which is the thing, government entities don't change, we have to force them to change. You know if I can charge you money to stay in a rundown apartment, I'm going to charge you. How many landlords are actually doing something if you stay there and only complaint? But if people are moving out...

**CGVRC Faculty:** Do you think that there's actually programs and policies that are being implemented, that are making it here?

**Dwayne Daniel:** Yeah, but they're watered down. They're watered down, they're limited, it's not enough. We have a lot of band aids on programs, we have, this whole approach to gun violence, particularly in impoverished neighborhoods. You know, there's no quick fix.

**CGVRC Faculty:** Do you have any suggestions about how...

**Dwayne Daniel:** Education, education, education, education, provide better education! If you do that, if you teach little Dwayne how to really read and how to do math, I don't



need you as I grow because I'm learning along the line. If you don't, of course I'm, a kid. I'm going to veer off, I'm human. No one walks a straight line. It may be a hundredth of the population that has done it in our life, our existence. Okay? But no, I think it is through education and really, it has to be comprehensive. It has to be a multitude of things and all of us have to step up, all of us. Unfortunately though, we live in a country that's about business. It's about serving business and not necessarily the customer and unfortunately we live in a city that is very separate, segregated still to this day, and it never hits home until it hits home.

**CGVRC Faculty:** It's an interesting, important point. Very segregated city. You were somebody that traveled 40 miles, here to those boundaries, so for the city of Chicago as a whole, what can we do to address, to prevent gun violence? All the different neighborhoods...

**Dwayne Daniel:** They really got to listen to the people's concerns. Uh, quit talking, just action. Really just quit talking, quit getting the committee together and wasting more dollars on hiring more cronies to figure out what we knew 50 years ago. You know, it's not rocket science. It really isn't, right? We all know how we conduct and run our houses, our lives and without impeding on other people, right? Without endangering other people. We all know that personally, what we do, right? So, I mean you just have to put in some real actions, you know? Yeah, you need police back on the street walking, you need police that really understand the communities they work in.

You need people, teachers, you need bankers, you need CEOs that truly are trying to help. Now, that's a lot, but that's the real reality because human instinct will always take over it. If you feel that you're doing way more than her and she's getting the same shares, you gone feel a little slighted, even if you've been reared to not even look that way. God knows if you have siblings, you're definitely going to feel that way because it's just siblings, we compete and have those competitions. So, I mean we really just, put it all on the top of the list and let's implement some real, comprehensive, things that are directly affecting, okay? It's simple. If childcare hinders a potential student from going to school, let's offer childcare. Our tax dollars already paid for it. So please don't tell me what else you need. It's there.

The Park District. When I was coming up, we had a multitude of programs through routine after school and things like that. Most of the schools were open, more than a lot of public schools with swimming pools at the time. Walter Dyett was one of the newer schools back then, sitting in Washington Park, now it had a swimming pool. Well, you know what? Walter Dyett opened up that pool, that gym, to the community, to access. So, you know what happened? Kids learned how to swim in a black neighborhood, look there! It sounds funny, but that's the truth. And what did it cost? The very dollars that people are already spending already.

You know, we have this idea that we're going to save us from us. I can show you a better way that I can save you from all of this out here. First, I have to scare you into believing that you need safety first. It's sad, but it's a tactic that's been used. I mean, but you have to be able to provide. I mean, come on this community, just got some damn really fresh groceries with the Whole Food opening. Lincoln Park, not beating up on Lincoln Park, but every half a block. Fresh food opportunities, fresh produce opportunities. So, you can't keep this up thinking that it's insanity, right? To think that you'll get a different result and you're producing the same quality, the same things. So, you know, you need education. I think first and foremost, really quality education, put public dollars where public dollars should be directed to. Quit with this idea that kids in Chicago, in impoverished, low income, highly marginalized neighborhoods or communities don't deserve a quality education. Quit telling me what you're going to do. Do it. Quit hiring folks for teachers, principals, firemen, police officers, state's attorneys, that don't work for people, you know? I mean, I don't know, it's not that hard really to figure out, you know, we have a lot of wrong people on buses, in wrong roles. You know, people become teachers. They used to become teachers and doctors wanting to serve. The service part of a lot of these service jobs is really gone. And again, that's for a number of reasons. Sometimes it's just because people have to survive, have to accept things, you know, and that can be frustrating as well.

**CGVRC Faculty:**

Are there any, is there any research that still needs to be done? Any research questions that you have as you, as you think through action, which actions to take or how to take them? Any research questions you feel like have emerged from your experience in Englewood? That you think we need to better understand?

**Dwayne Daniel:**

I think if you, if the research, maybe it should be just really looking at the trauma this community has encountered, since it first changed. Fifty years ago Englewood was a totally populated community of a different ethnicity, different racial background. So, since that point and anything probably before me, as far as me remembering. I'm sure there's research you can read that's been written about Englewood prior, but if you do, if you just address the people as humans, first off. If I don't look at you as a man, then it's hard to get past anything else, if I look at you any other way, I'm going to have these biases that all humans have, but I'm definitely going to have them if I look at you based off of your ethnicity, what neighborhoods you come from, what's your parents income and things like that. If I don't look at you as being a man first, I've missed so much and anything you tell me is already tainted.

**CGVRC Faculty:**

So, understanding the historical growth and occurrence of trauma since the 50s, if we gave you, let's say we gave you a crystal ball, right? And you could ask it anything about Englewood, what would you ask, in addition to how the trauma changed since 1950?

**Dwayne Daniel:**

When are we really going to address working to- or maybe-I get the how, so I don't want to ask how we address it. But it's more of the when, again, because

it's time for action and conversations, research. Don't get me wrong, research is always required and needed, it's history. So, the only way we know, we have to know where we came from to know where we're going. So again, you have to just start really implementing the basic stuff, the real basic stuff. Again, how do I learn if I'm home or how do I learn if I can't walk down the street to go half a block to school and you're telling me, oh, we're going to put more police in your neighborhood, put more policing in your neighborhood. That's not the answer. It's not.

**CGVRC Faculty:** When is this going to happen?

**Dwayne Daniel:** Right – so, when do we really implement things? I'll give you an example of something. The Illinois Department of Corrections had a bad history of not securing inmates once they got incarcerated, turned over to their custody. The gangs and every other organization ran these prisons for years, I mean fully ran them. Honestly, and something they did in the late 90s, early two thousand, that changed that. And part of it was accepting the fact that they didn't have control. And also, how do you get control? Well, you have to give up some things, some of your power, but in that case it's kind of hard when you're in an environment like that, to give up power. So, what you do is you have to build real alliance with those kinds that run these places.

How can they really have a chance to rehabilitate or to correct this past indiscretions against society if he's always thinking about something negative occurring while he's here. So unfortunately, that says, hmm, we gotta lock down this place, we have to gain control, physical control. They had to do it. And in this community, as far as gaining control, just quit bullshitting folks that you can't get guns out of here. Quit bullshitting. I shouldn't say it, but there are people in that community that are underneath your policies, say something different and we know policy dictates all. No matter what, anybody can get in front of a camera and say what we're doing and this and that. And again, you have to put up real actions that the people were asking for. I think it needs to be a more people first approach. Right? In the case of the Department of Corrections, unfortunately, laws since changed because people that were getting assaulted, whether physical, psychological, whatever, started suing them. So, the extreme numbers.

You know in American money tends to dictate a lot of how policy and stuff reacts. And I give Kudos to them because I was coming here when I first started working, you could feel the anxiety, working there, you felt like an inmate. Well because everywhere you go, you have to be buzzed and things like you can't move without someone allowing you to move and I get that. It's how it should be, it's a place you shouldn't want to return as a human being, you know? And it's a thin line between being cruel and unusual punishment. But that's the law, that's the land, that's how we chose to deal with outcast people or people who we deem not really should reside amongst us for a set period of time, for whatever crime against humanity or man that we've created.

**CGVRC Faculty:** Would you say that you're optimistic or pessimistic that things in Chicago will get better?

**Dwayne Daniel:** I'm really optimistic, I know at times I sound pessimistic, but I'm really optimistic about stuff. Just frustrated, you know? A lot of it is just frustration that people are suffering, and people that were in position to do things, don't do them. It's in a lot of conversation, talk versus actions. You know, I'm kind of a simple man. We can spend, what we spend, \$100,000,000,000 on the expressway and you're supposed to have them. We should. Infrastructure created a lot of jobs and opportunities, so you can dedicate funds to stuff like that. But yet, a child can go to school and has a book that I read, today. Your priorities really missed by the expectation to think that the child should learn now and also bad again. They don't have a nutritious meal to eat while they're in school, but yet a taxpayer's, particularly property owners in Chicago, are getting back with increases constantly. Right?

The thing is, most people don't care about paying their fair share for the right things at all. I don't think no American really cares about the right things. We all have different personal preferences and things like that, but we're not thinking when it comes to education, if people understand that if you're educated, and she's educated, and I'm educated, we're a better community. If you're the only one educated, you got to believe that we're looking at you to try to gain some insights. Maybe even because of, feel slighted as to why you and not us, you know?

**CGVRC Faculty:** So you feel optimistic but frustrated?

**Dwayne Daniel::** Oh, very frustrated.

**CGVRC Faculty:** How do you bring that sense of optimism to other people in this community and Englewood?

**Dwayne Daniel:** Show it through my work, here in this office, every time I encounter an individual. I've always been working in some of the places I've worked prior, over my life. It was easy to go into a place where I'm the only African American male.

**CGVRC Faculty:** You're saying it was easy?

**Dwayne Daniel:** Very easy in this very city, very easy, right? Throughout the 70s, 80s, 90s, and even in the 2000s, right? In this millennium. Be genuine, smile, how you doing? It doesn't cost me anything. People are so withdrawn from other individuals. It's mind boggling and we built a lot of things, these things, they put us in the phones and we're walking and we're not paying attention to each other. We bump into each other and get hit by a car. All this stuff. People aren't courteous anymore. Right? I mean, so what we really try to do in this office, and I've tried to do in my life, it's just, "Hey, how you doing?" I don't know Fred, but if we

walk past each other and catch eyes, I will say, "How you doing?" Or at least give you a head nod.

No, there wasn't anything. Just hey, you're human, I'm a human, figure we cross paths. What's wrong with it? A lot of that is missing. Just again, some of the simple things that doesn't cost much, you know, staff here when you've been, again, traumatized, like most of us have who grow up in major cities and come from dysfunctional households. The trauma that you've been heard over that time is something people don't really think about it, right? Because they don't. Some people don't. I don't know why, but it never, I can't say never, but he seems to not come in people's mind that would do this to a writer fee with my kid. You know, we always had what I would do an attitude instead of saying, "Hey, what you need, you need something to eat? What's wrong? How you doing today?" You'd be surprised how a kid responds, I don't care what you look like or they look like.

It's a simple fact. Most of the time, you're just giving them the time of day because we've all been kids. Even us adults still want the same thing because the kids still exist in us. That side that people really care about that Dwayne will make it from point A to point B, right? So, in this office that is about really servicing, get frustrated, dealing with the public is not the easiest job. And particularly in a community where people have been underserved for so long. I say, can't come with their own. Did this. I don't. We're not able to provide the service that they feel they should, should get. So, the answer is, "Hey, I know it's tough. You get frustrated. I'll come up there and deal with some of the abuse," but I know how to spin it and sau, "Yes, ma'am, how can I help you?" A smile sometimes tones down a lot of anger with people, right? You just, a lot of times, have to treat people, we really have to quit singing and do it. Treat me how you want to be treated, again, there's a lot of talk, no action. So, I've noticed coming here, we've still got a lot of work to do, we've come a long way with improving the students' experience here and it starts with that first contact.

So yeah, we all know we've heard it, I noticed it a lot when I was coming up. You don't get an opportunity after one try, you get one chance to impress the person, whereas they say when you're going for jobs. That elevator pitch, right? Okay, you get those few seconds, those few moments to impress someone because people will take you off of what they appear, see you as the first time. It's unfortunate, but a lot of us are that way, so you have to impress upon folks, you know, "Ma'am, I'm here to serve you, what do you need?" Wow, you know, and people tend to tone down. Right? And then you provide them service. When you can't provide, telling me no, or telling me what you can't do for me, right? And not helping me to lead me to the path that I really need to go is a disservice. And people don't understand that, that's what it is.

**CGVRC Faculty:** Totally.

**Dwayne Daniel:** Just walk downstairs. I say down there. See the big time right there. Occasionally, I'm not saying all the time because I'm real. I understand there's

the safety issue because we don't know what's on every individual's mind, we don't know what people carry on a daily basis now. So, I'll just say that's the step you go for. It's called that A service, correct. That's that A service rep.

**CGVRC Faculty:** Service and civility, the general civility today-

**Dwayne Daniel:** We've got to get better, and we've improved, dramatically, you know, but again, I'm a firm believer when you think you've arrived, when you think you've done all you can do, dig a hole because you're dead. If you think that's all you can do you know, because unfortunately there's always more you can do, right? Now-

**CGVRC Faculty:** I get that.

**Dwayne Daniel:** Or whatever tag you try to put on, right? And as you'll learn over time, is you're constantly have given an opportunity to wake up every morning, that you're reaching too far. You're blowing this way out of proportion.

**CGVRC Faculty:** Yeah, yeah, I agree.

**Dwayne Daniel:** Much simpler, therefore is much more, it's more obtainable, you know? But you know, we, were in that society and of course, but we have to, that's where, again, the rearing, what we learn at home, those values, what's instilled in us helps us a lot to carry us through this challenging life, that really is out here.

**CGVRC Faculty:** Well, this has been really helpful.